

REMARKS**I. Status of the Application**

Claims 1 and 3-23 are pending in this application. In the March 5, 2008 office action, the Examiner:

- A. Allowed claims 19-23;
- B. Rejected claims 1, 7, 9, 12, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US 4,084,472 to Niimi in view of admitted prior art;
- C. Rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Niimi in view of prior art, in further view of US 6,219,815 to DesJardins et al.; and
- D. Objected to claims 3-6, 8, 10-11 and 13-16 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

The allowance of claims 19-23 is gratefully acknowledged. In this response, applicants have amended claims 1, 7, 12 and 18, cancelled claims 3, 5, 8, 10, 13 and 15.

II. The Rejection of Independent Claims 1, 7, 12, and 18 Should be Withdrawn

In the March 5, 2008 Office action, the examiner rejected claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over US 4,084,472 to Niimi in view of admitted prior art.

A. Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of either allowable claim 3 or allowable claim 5. In the March 5, 2008 Office action, the examiner indicated that claims 3

and 5 would be allowable if re-written in independent form. Accordingly, because claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of either allowable claim 3 or allowable claim 5, it is respectfully submitted that the examiner's rejection of independent claim 1 should be withdrawn.

B. Claim 7

Claim 7 has been amended to include the limitations of either allowable claim 8 or allowable claim 10. In the March 5, 2008 Office action, the examiner indicated that claims 8 and 10 would be allowable if re-written in independent form. Accordingly, because claim 7 has been amended to include the limitations of either allowable claim 8 or allowable claim 10, it is respectfully submitted that the examiner's rejection of independent claim 7 should be withdrawn.

C. Claim 12

Claim 12 has been amended to include the limitations of either allowable claim 13 or allowable claim 15. In the March 5, 2008 Office action, the examiner indicated that claims 13 and 15 would be allowable if re-written in independent form. Accordingly, because claim 12 has been amended to include the limitations of either allowable claim 13 or allowable claim 15, it is respectfully submitted that the examiner's rejection of independent claim 12 should be withdrawn.

D. Claim 18

Claim 18 has been amended to include limitations related to those found in previous claim 5, which the examiner indicated was allowable. Accordingly, in view of the amendments to claim 18, it is respectfully submitted that the examiner's rejection of independent claim 18 should be withdrawn.

III. Dependent Claims 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16 and 17 Are Allowable

Each of claims 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16 and 17 depends from and incorporates all of the limitations of one of independent claims 1, 7 or 12. As set forth above, independent claims 1, 7 and 12 are allowable, and the examiner's rejection of claims 1, 7 or 12 should be withdrawn. Therefore, because each of dependent claims 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16 and 17 depend from and incorporate all of the limitations of one of claims 1, 7 or 12, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 16 and 17 are also allowable.

IV. Conclusion

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted the applicant has made a patentable contribution to the art. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application is therefore respectfully requested.

In the event applicant has inadvertently overlooked the need for an extension of time or payment of an additional fee, the applicant conditionally petitions therefore, and authorizes any fee deficiency to be charged to deposit account 13-0014.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Russ Fowler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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